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KUZNETSK COMBINE MEETS NEW TASKS

In the last 4 years at the Kuznetsk Metallurgical Combine, Kemerovo Oblast, smelting of pig iron has increased 12 percent, steel smelting 15 percent, and production of rolled metal 22 percent.

The plant is now striving to convert on a wider scale to the use of local ore in its blast furnaces, despite the fact that the ore is leaner than that obtained from Magnitogorsk. The combine has pledged to increase consupmtion of local ore and, at the same time, to maintain a high output of pig iron and achieve even better coefficients for utilization of blast-furnace capacity. In 1940, the combine used 32.6 percent local ores, and 70.7 in 1949. At the same time, the coefficient for capacity blast-furnace utilization has improved markedly. The improvement was achieved first of all by a better preparation of raw materials. The ore is more finely crushed screening of the ore has been organized, and the relative quantity of fines has been reduced and iron content increased. The workers have learned to improve furnace operation and have considerably increased the length of the furnace run between repairs. Formerly, the furnace was operated for 3-4 years without capital repair, whereas now it is operated 9-10 years.

At one of the furnaces, a wet blast was recently used, and the productivity of that furnace increased as much as 15 percent, while coke consumption per ton of pig iron decreased. Certain metallurgists have come out against the wet blast, asserting that it reduces the quality of pig iron and therefore that of the steel and rolled products made from it. The combine's metallurgists have used the method of slow cooling of the metal which completely eliminates the appearance of defects. Further research on blast-furnace performance with the wet blast and the use of the method in other furnaces is one of the most pressing problems facing the combine.

The combine must increase its consumption of local ore every month until it can entirely eliminate the use of ore requiring long-distance haulage. This task can be accomplished by means of expanding local ore mining and establishing more beneficiation and sintering facilities. The combine has grave grievances on this score against the Ministry of the Construction of Heavy Industry Enterprises which is not fulfilling its tasks in this work.

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The problem of better preparation of raw materials is one for the entire metallurgical industry. At the combine and at several other plants, the accumulation of fine iron ore (flue dust) from the blast furnaces reaches tremendous proportions; something should be done about this serious and useless loss. The beneficiation and sintering of ore should be set up on a considerably wider scale than it is now. Much depends on the builders who have been slow in building the beneficiation and sintering plants.

The metallurgists also have claims against machine builders. Oxygen should find a wider use in metallurgical enterprises. At the combine, the use of oxygen has proved itself in several sectors. Machine builders must design and build heavy machinery for the production of oxygen and at the same time give assistance to metallurgists in increasing the production of metal on this new and higher level.

As for the coal industry, the effort to increase the quality of coking coals in the Kuzbass mines has not yet been sufficiently effective.

The Kuznetsk steelworkers have already considerably exceeded the average progressive norms established for metallurgical workers in the middle of 1948 for production per square meter of open-hearth furnace hearth. The steelworkers have achieved a record annual productivity of the furnaces. Automatic temperature control has been introduced into all furnaces. In some, the dinas brick has been replaced in the checkerwork by high-alumina brick. All these measures are increasing the run of the open-hearth furnaces and the output of steel. The use of chromomagnesite brick in the open hearths is opening wide perspectives for an increase in steel output. At one of the furnaces, a chromomagnesite roof has already withstood 450 melts and the furnace continues to be operated. A furnace with this type of roof can withstand a higher temperature and speed the smelting process. The expansion of chromomagnesite brick production and its use in the furnaces is another pressing problem.

The combine's rolling shops are operating on schedule. The soaking pits and furnaces have automatic temperature control. The idleness of the mills has been considerably reduced. In 1940, for example, the idleness of the blooming mill constituted 22 percent of the nominal time, whereas in 1949 it constituted only 8-9 percent. The actual operation of the blooming mill increased from 272 days (24-hour periods) in 1940 to 313 days in 1949.

The percentage of defective production has decreased, and output of first-class products has increased. Output of No 1 rails has increased from 81 percent in 1940 to 96 percent in 1949. Output of first-class girders, beams, and angle irons is now 99 percent. -- R. Belan, Director, Kuznetsk Metallurgical Combine

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